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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 USNATO 000212

SIPDIS

KABUL FOR EMBASSY POL-MIL AND CSTC-A

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SUBJECT: ISAF COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC POL-MIL PLAN (CSPMP)
MILEPOSTS FOR 2008

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Classified By: Ambassador Victoria Nuland, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. With Bucharest well behind us, we should use the new ISAF internal plan to strengthen ISAF's commitment to conduct counterinsurgency operations, to give more direction to NATO's drifting ANA training and equipping support, broaden Allies' involvement in police training, and keep NATO's engagement with Pakistan realistic, yet productive. This internal plan, the "Comprehensive Strategic Political-Military Plan" (CSPMP), endorsed by NATO and ISAF Heads of State and Government on April 3, lays out 15 objectives and corresponding actions to achieve those objectives. We offer the following ideas to leverage the CSPMP to improve NATO's game in Afghanistan. We should use many of the defined actions, plus associated timelines, to push changes we have long wanted in the ISAF mission, while maintaining a healthy dose of realism that achieving consensus will be a tough slog. END SUMMARY.

ADVANCING COUNTERINSURGENCY (COIN) AT NATO

¶2. (C) In negotiating the CSPMP in March, a number of Allies demonstrated a continuing allergy to using the word "counterinsurgency" in NATO documents and/or a misunderstanding of the concept. France and Spain took a hard line against any sort of mention, while Germany showed itself surprisingly forward-leaning in recognizing that elements of ISAF's work in Afghanistan indeed include counterinsurgency. At the end of the day, the consensus solution was an agreement to "establish mechanisms for ISAF to exchange best practices and lessons learned, with a particular emphasis on . . . the counterinsurgency experience

of nations."

13. (C) We should use this limited opening to strengthen Allies' understanding of COIN, and demystify both the term and the concept at NATO. Increased understanding and agreement on a set of useful tasks for NATO could help us subsequently push for an agreed Allied policy on COIN, even if under a different, more Euro-palatable name. (Note: "Comprehensive Approach" rings better in European ears. End note.) Initial steps should include:

--Using the "NAC Reinforced" format to bring together Defense policy directors and SAC/T for a briefing and discussion of COIN and lessons learned in Afghanistan; we'd suggest a senior OSD official reinforced by a U.S. ISAF participating general officer;

--Producing more "REL NATO" reporting from the field on COIN operations and lessons learned, and more "REL NATO" intelligence to share with Allies;

--Bringing more senior officers currently deployed to ISAF or who have just finished tours to brief both the political and military sides of NATO HQ. These officers undoubtedly contribute to U.S. lessons learned processes, and their experience should also routinely be used to NATO's benefit at the senior level.

--Pushing for a tasking to NATO Military Authorities to

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develop as soon as possible an agreed NATO definition of COIN and corresponding Alliance-wide COIN policy (SAC/T should have the lead role in developing this).

Training and Equipping Afghan National Security Forces

14. (C) ANA: The CSPMP tasks NATO, by the end of 2008, to complete the major task of "finalizing . . . a comprehensive NATO concept for training and equipment support to ANA." In the CSPMP, HOSG also re-commit to longstanding efforts to assist in the provision of equipment packages for the ANA; to source and fully implement approved NATO short-term training initiatives; and to approve, source, and begin to implement NATO long-term training initiatives. The key factor in fulfilling the tasks in the CSPMP is Allied political will. A persistent shortfall of 22 OMLTs has not been resolved; a 3-million euro shortfall in funds to transport pending equipment donations has remained for any months; zero progress has been made in filling CSTC-A billets and providing mobile teams. Allied efforts in filling "long-term" initiatives currently under discussion (Branch Schools, Institutional Mentoring and Advisory Activities, ANA Language Institute) have also been sub-par.

15. (C) ANA (con't): The CSPMP tasking to develop a "comprehensive concept" by the end of 2008 gives us an opportunity to sharpen the role of NATO in training and equipping the ANA. We believe we should spend more political capital convincing Allies to do more through these agreed NATO initiatives, including quarterly briefings by CSTC-A to the NAC live or by video, and an interagency Road Show to key underperforming capitals to push for more. We also believe that the future C2 structure of the ISAF mission as it relates to training and equipping should be examined as we develop a national position on the comprehensive concept tasked in the CSPMP.

16. (C) ANP: While NATO does gendarmerie training in Iraq, some Allies, led by France and Germany, have prevented NATO from playing a formal role in police training in Afghanistan. While the CSPMP does not necessarily break any new ground in terms of assigning new tasks to ISAF, it does call for Allies to enhance their contributions to the training and mentoring

of the ANP. Acknowledging that the rigid French and German position will be difficult to sway, we believe that the "hook" provided in the CSPMP can help us encourage Allies to do more on a bilateral basis under CSTC-A auspices. At the end of the day, we need to move the European trainers out of the classroom and into the field, mentoring police at the district levels, to complete the training provided by CSTC-A, which according to COMCSTC-A MG Cone, gets the ANP to about "the 80 percent level." In the next few months, CSTC-A will be short more than 100 district-level 12-person Police Mentoring Teams (reftel) - European expertise could play a key role in filling this gap and topping off the remaining 20 percent of training. Longer-term, we should look into identifying niches in police training where NATO military forces could make a positive impact. Force protection to expand the Focused District Development program into more areas, as well as gendarmerie training (i.e. Afghan National Civil Order Police in the Afghan context) are two potential areas. Again, a Road Show to key European capitals might help Allies understand how little effort it will take on

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their part to see better, cleaner police in the districts where they serve.

Pakistan

17. (C) The CSPMP aims to strengthen mil-mil ties between ISAF and Pakistan, enhance the Tripartite Commission to better address cross-border issues, and bolster NATO-Pakistani political relations, as well. The issue of Pakistani safe havens for insurgents who operate in Afghanistan, cause ISAF casualties, and undermine the long-term stability of Afghanistan has also become a hot subject in the NAC since the CSPMP was approved. Allies are clamoring for greater political engagement with the Pakistanis by the SecGen (and multiple Pakistani senior officials are seeking out the SecGen simultaneously) and NATO's Senior Civilian Representative in Kabul, and are searching for ways they, both as nations and as NATO Allies, can be helpful. Former COMISAF General McNeill, in his June 4 farewell brief to the NAC, also recommended an "unrelenting political dialogue" on the problem of militant sanctuaries in Pakistan's border regions.

18. (C) Our challenge as CSPMP implementation moves forward will be to help define the right role for NATO engagement with Pakistan, one which the Pakistanis welcome and which leads to concrete results. Nervous Allies will be difficult to manage politically, but we have an opportunity through NATO to increase European investment in the tough choices necessary to help transform the Pakistani army and Frontier Corps into more efficient COIN troops, and to help address some of the economic issues in the border regions that exacerbate the extremist problem. A strong push by SecDef Gates at the June 13-14 NATO Defense Ministerial, a recent briefing by USD/P Edelman, and past briefings by A/S Boucher have helped a great deal in this regard. In the context of the CSPMP, we offer the following ideas that could potentially turn Allied angst within the halls of NATO into concrete help in our efforts to defeat the insurgency in Afghanistan and global terrorism stemming from the Pakistani border areas:

--Bringing a senior U.S. briefer to a Reinforced NAC on Pakistan, in order to sight Allies on key priorities, lead debate at NATO, and encourage more European investment in solving the problems of weak Pakistani military capabilities and lack of economic development, especially in the border areas and with Pashtun refugee groups ripe for recruitment;

--Reviving the high-level military dialogue within the Tripartite Commission;

--Encouraging the Secretary General to strengthen his political dialogue with Pakistani counterparts, and giving NATO's SCR in Afghanistan leeway (which he presently lacks) to engage in Islamabad should the Pakistanis wish it;

--Expanding the successful Border Coordination Center model from RC-East to RC-South, adapting it to fit the different geography of RC-South;

--Assisting with the planning and construction of Afghan Border Outposts, mirroring Pakistani outposts along

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Pakistan's western frontier;

--Identifying ways in which NATO forces could supplement and help to expand existing and future U.S. training efforts of the Frontier Corps;

--Establish a NATO Trust Fund to help fund the equipping of the Frontier Corps, or potentially broader SSR activities identified by COMISAF in close consultation with U.S. military advisors in Pakistan.

--Continue to push Allies hard to fill longstanding ISAF force shortfalls aimed at getting NATO into the "gray areas" of RC-South and along the Pakistani border (a PRT in Nimroz and a border security battalion are two of the most pressing shortfalls);

--Longer term, and depending on Pakistani wishes, establish a NATO-Pakistan Cooperation Program similar to that which exists with Afghanistan, aimed at enhancing Security Reform in Pakistan and potentially leading to a deeper political-military partnership if Pakistan is interested.
NULAND